

SECOND SUPPLEMENT TO HONGKONG DAILY PRESS.

HONGKONG, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25TH, 1883.

"THE FRIEND OF CHINA" AND BRITISH MERCHANTS IN CHINA.

In another column we reproduce from the *Friend of China*, the organ of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade, an article commenting on the Hon. F. B. Johnson's recent open letter to Dr. Dunbar, of Peking. The *Friend of China*, on behalf of the Society it represents, repudiates the charge of putting forth "highly coloured and sensational accounts" of the effects of opium, admits that a scientifically exact expression of the results of opium consumption is at present not in existence, and states that, failing such, it has considered it the fairest plan to present all the evidence on both sides to the English public. The Anti-Opium Society could not well ignore the evidences tending to show that opium smoking in moderation is a harmless indulgence, but the comments of its organ clearly show that it trusts such evidence as a counsel in a court of law trusts evidence given on the opposite side. The article against the drug is placed in the best possible light, and evidence in support of the harmlessness of opium smoking in the worst. The *Friend* says:—

"The exact degree of the injuriousness of the drug is not essential part of our case, which is a casuistical expression designed to give an appearance of fairness to the article while at the same time withholding as complete assent to the possibility of the contrary view to that of the transports being the veriest evil. If the drug be not injurious we fail to see the *raison d'être* of the Anti-Opium Society, and certainly it is only by putting forth highly coloured and sensational accounts of the harmful effects of opium smoking that it is enabled to carry on its agitation and extort funds from a credulous public. If once the non-injuriousness of the drug were conceded by the Society all interest in the question on the part of the English public would at once cease, and the energetic Secretary of the Society would find the subscriptions insufficient for the payment of his comfortable salary. In the very article in question, however, the *Friend* clearly indicates the view it supports. 'Many of us here,' it says, 'who study all the evidence available, regard the anti-smokers as far more injurious than he [Mr. Johnson] seems to think it. We think that Dr. Dunbar is right in holding that medical men and missionaries who know the language and mix with the natives are more likely to know the truth than the merchants of Hongkong.' Even this we cannot admit; but it is not only the evidence of the merchants of Hongkong that is opposed to that of Dr. Dunbar; we have also that of Dr. Ayres, the Colonial Surgeon, who must be regarded as an independent witness, and who, by his connection with the good, has a better opportunity of observing the effect of opium smoking than any other man. Mr. Johnson, in his letter to Dr. Dunbar, said:—'If you assist in a latter part of your article, the result of opium smoking is inevitably the same physical, moral, and financial ruin,' affecting a large portion of the population. It would be interesting to learn how it is possible that foreign merchants, brought by the necessity of their avocations into constant intercourse with some class or other of the adult male parts of the population, see, as you say, they do, but little of the effects of opium smoking. In this colony, at all events, the headquarters of the opium-trade, in which there is no prohibition against the practice of opium smoking, where there are naturally fewer restraints than elsewhere imposed upon the habit by Chinese public opinion, and where, if anywhere, the vice, if vice it necessarily must, prevails to excess—foreigners do not live in a cessation spirit, and their observation, as a body, of the effects of opium smoking is likely to be at least as accurate as that of any special class of foreigners upon the mainland." There is but little poverty indigenous in Hongkong; for the professional beggars one meets in the streets are attracted by the wealth of the place, and do not belong to it; there is, as Mr. Johnson remarks, no prohibition against opium smoking; the people have ample means to indulge in it, and the practices undoubtedly largely prevail, much more largely in all probability than amongst any other population, of the same size on the mainland. Yet where in the colony are to be found the emaciated victims of the so-called vice, who, according to the Anti-Opium Society, ought to be met with on every hand? Surely, if they exist, they ought to be visible; but the fact remains that they are not visible, and while various missionary societies establish opium refuges on the mainland away from the light of public observation, here in Hongkong, where opium smoking is a common practice amongst the population, and where the working of a refuge would be intelligently watched by a large foreign community, not one of the societies has thought it necessary, or prudent to establish such an institution. What other conclusion is possible than that the medico-missionaries in charge of hospitals in China are, as Dr. Ayres says, bamboozled by the opium patients?

Opium smokers are subject to sickness as well as other men, but it does not follow that the sickness is attributable to the opium any more than the sickness of a teetotaller is to be ascribed to his indulgence in water. It is not difficult, however, to see how the medical missionaries might be largely misled by their patients on this point. When doctors disagree, it is probably difficult for a layman to decide, but we believe that all the symptoms described as those attendant upon opium smoking, or upon the derivative of the drug after its hash has been prepared, might be attributed to other causes, as for instance, the diarrhoea which figures in the reported cases, unfortunately many treated opium smokers are subject to diarrhoea. Dr. Ayres's testimony is more valuable than that of the witnesses on the other side in that the opium smokers who come under his observation in the goal do so compulsorily and not voluntarily; they must be regarded as a fair "mass" of opium smokers in general; if anything considering the men below the criminal class, one would expect to find them more abandoned to any vice in which they indulge than other people. Mr. Collymore, writing to the *Times* on the subject, and referring to Dr. Ayres's report, says:—A key in the system of investigation generally is that the original application form which I have covered, and for the reason that it is not published. I think it might be well to read two or three extracts for the information of my dear friends.—

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It is curious to note that the *Friend* describes the "pains" in which the smokers would have been "abused." The *Friend* also refers to the men who have smoked opium for thirty years told by Mr. Johnson, says:—These are the survivors of thirty years of opium

smoking: how many who started with them, and even long after them, have fallen out of the way and died before their time? We put this question not rhetorically but seriously." How many non-smokers have fallen out by the way and died before that time? It is significant that whenever the *Friend* leaves, declamation and demands to argue him into drift into absurdity.

HONGKONG LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

A meeting of the Legislative Council was held on the 18th instant. There was present His Excellency the GOVERNOR, Sir GEORGE BOWER, G.C.M.G.; His Grace PARTRIDGE, Chief Justice; Hon. W. H. MAUN, C.M.G., Colonial Secretary; Hon. E. T. O'MAHONY, Attorney-General; Hon. A. L. LEWIS, Colonial Treasurer; Hon. P. BYRNE, Hon. J. M. PRICE, Surveyor-General; Hon. F. B. JOHNSON, Hon. F. STEWART, LL.D., Registrar-General.

MURKIN.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE COUNCIL.

His Excellency—Hon. gentlemen, I cordially agree with the hon. member that the standing orders in force to regulate the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of the Crown Colony should be re-introduced as far as Hongkong, and that all relevant legislation should be left for the future consideration of the Legislative Council.

His Excellency—Hon. members,

Mr. Johnson—*I am not in position to answer the question put to me by the hon. member [Mr. Johnson]. St. Joseph's College was begun after I had finished my work in the Educational Department, and I have had no opportunity of finding out what the opinion of the Portuguese Government is in regard to the matter.*

His Excellency—*There is no difficulty in this case, as the Royal Charter of St. Joseph's College gives full power to the Governor to make any alterations he may consider necessary.*

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an easy winner by a long lead. The "Barham" was the slowest boat of the fleet of this "Spartan" race, and was soon far behind. The police boat, which have usually been in the first flight or throughout in this race in former years, was placed on this occasion, and we can safely say that had they competed the "Gunner's" crew would have had to pull all out to win, and there would have been a better race.

The "CHAMPION" Cup.—For Four-Oared Canton Cutters. Distance, One-mile-and-a-half. Entrance, \$10.

"Look"!—First.

Bow, Mr. T. Glass 1st. 10 lbs.
No. 2, Mr. R. Goodall 10st. 11 lbs.
No. 3, Mr. G. Stewart 12st. 12 lbs.
Stroke, Mr. J. I. Hughes 1st. 11 lbs.
Cox, Mr. G. A. Caldwell 1st. 11 lbs.

"Second."

Bow, Mr. C. Dickinson 1st. 10 lbs.
No. 2, Mr. G. P. Lamont 1st. 10 lbs.
No. 3, Mr. H. Muller 1st. 10 lbs.
Stroke, Mr. G. Kultzan 1st. 11 lbs.
Cox, Mr. H. Sampson 9st. 5 lbs.

"Third."

Bow, Mr. B. Bushnell 1st. 10 lbs.
No. 2, Mr. J. H. Steward-Lockhart 1st. 10 lbs.
No. 3, Mr. E. W. Rutter 1st. 10 lbs.
Stroke, Mr. T. E. Fisher 1st. 10 lbs.
Cox, Mr. G. Grimbie 1st. 10 lbs.

All three boats got well away to a fine start, and Hughes came at once to put the pace on, going off at a sharp though rather short stroke of 10 to the minute. The other two boats contented themselves with a stroke of 12 to the minute. The Chinese boat, which had gone off, and the "Shamrock," to fall astern of the "Korriblum." Hughes maintained their lead all the way along, though the stroke seemed rather jumpy, and increased it steadily to the finish. Fisher's bow man seemed to be pulling very early in the race, and the "Korriblum" was also very loose. In the end Hughes' boat won by over a dozen lengths, the American ship "Twilight" which had got off late, and the "Shamrock" to fall astern of the "Korriblum."

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Again the men-of-war made a poor show for entries, considering the large number of war ships in the harbour, only two boats entering. The race between the two down to the first mark, of Green Island, was a very close one, but after rounding this, they had a dead heat to windward up to the next mark, boat of China. Then the English boat worked well to starboard, and using well-hauled oars, obtained an easy victory.

SAILING RACE.—For Sailing Ships. Distance, 500. First Prize, \$30. Second, \$10.

Post Entries:

The American schooner "Spartan" Chinese rig cutwater.

The German barque Anna Barbara's jolly boat.

The American ship "Twilight" which had got off late.

The Danish barque Michael Schøn's jolly boat.

The Spartan's cutter, with a Chinese crew.

The American schooner "Spartan" Chinese rig cutwater.

The German barque Anna Barbara's jolly boat.

The American ship "Twilight" which had got off late.

The Danish barque Michael Schøn's jolly boat.

The "Korriblum" Third.

Bow, Mr. T. Glass 1st. 10 lbs.

No. 2, Mr. R. Goodall 10st. 11 lbs.

No. 3, Mr. G. Stewart 12st. 12 lbs.

Stroke, Mr. J. I. Hughes 1st. 11 lbs.

Cox, Mr. G. A. Caldwell 1st. 11 lbs.

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The American ship "Twilight" which had got off late.

The Danish barque Michael Schøn's jolly boat.

The "Korriblum" Third.

Bow, Mr. T. Glass 1st. 10 lbs.

No. 2, Mr. R. Goodall 10st. 11 lbs.

No. 3, Mr. G. Stewart 12st. 12 lbs.

Stroke, Mr. J. I. Hughes 1st. 11 lbs.

Cox, Mr. G. A. Caldwell 1st. 11 lbs.

All three boats got well away to a fine start, and Hughes at once began to put the pace on, going off at a sharp though rather short stroke of 10 to the minute. The other two boats contented themselves with a stroke of 12 to the minute. The Chinese boat, which had got off late, and the "Shamrock," to fall astern of the "Korriblum."

Hughes' man maintained their lead all the way along, though the stroke seemed rather jumpy, and increased it steadily to the finish. Fisher's bow man seemed to be pulling very early in the race, and the "Korriblum" was also very loose. In the end Hughes' boat won by over a dozen lengths, the American ship "Twilight" which had got off late, and the "Shamrock," to fall astern of the "Korriblum."

Again the men-of-war made a poor show for entries, considering the large number of war ships in the harbour, only two boats entering. The race between the two down to the first mark, of Green Island, was a very close one, but after rounding this, they had a dead heat to windward up to the next mark, boat of China. Then the English boat worked well to starboard, and using well-hauled oars, obtained an easy victory.

SAILING RACE.—For Sailing Ships. Distance, 500. First Prize, \$30. Second, \$10.

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